

Exciting News @Mt.SinaiChurch - Re-branding Our Communication

A number of months ago it was decided that we needed to re-vamp our communication efforts in order to present who we are to anyone interested in us. There were so many things that needed work. Our logo. The Facebook page. The website. The Game Changers and others were doing new things to make us more relevant in the community, but we needed to help people find us in this technological age and remember who we are. We needed a plan.

The Game Changers and Communication and Technology Team took on the challenge.

A marketing and communication specialist, Lisa Strahs-Lorenc, was asked to speak with us about social media, including LinkedIn and Facebook.

Leslie Schultz was interested in reviving our Facebook page and she introduced us to her daughter, Erica Schultz, who has an extensive background in marketing and communication experience. Erica showed us how to manage the page and easily create relevant content. Leslie picked up the reigns and, with the help of a few others, has been working on expanding our Facebook presence. Friend requests are on the rise and likes and positive comments are a regular occurrence.

After such a good experience, the leads of the Game Changers and CommTech teams spoke

with Erica about updating our website and creating a new logo, to which she agreed. Erica's ideas for the logo were fresh and thoughtful and her presentation of her process was clear cut. After a few tweaks, the logo was agreed upon by the CommTech team and presented to the congregation at a meeting in January where it was warmly received. This is a thrilling time for many of us who have wanted to bring all of our communication under the same identity.



In the meantime, the “pièce de resistance”, our website, was being rebuilt from scratch. Erica was able to incorporate our materials into a new format that flows nicely and looks beautiful. The site speaks to seekers, those who are curious about us, and those who would

like to use our services. It also provides what members and friends need to know about how we operate, board activities and events. As put by Dennis Laderwager, our Moderator, “This site puts Mt. Sinai Congregational Church on the map! It’s clean, easily navigated, provides valuable information and is most professional in appearance. This is a site that we all can be proud of and will help us move forward. Fabulous!”

The new website can be found at our regular address: msucc.org. Check it out! See what all the buzz is about.

Iftar Dinner

On March 17th, Mt. Sinai Congregational Church was pleased to host an Iftar Dinner in Voorhees Hall for the Turkish Cultural Center. Members of the Center brought a delicious multi-course meal to share with us as they broke their fast for the day.

Our Moderator, Dennis Laderwager, was on hand to deliver opening remarks and prayers to those gathered. Also addressing the guests were the President of the Turkish Cultural Center, Sadri Altinok, and Rabbi Helayne Shalhevet of Temple Beth Emeth in Mt. Sinai. About 50 people came to enjoy an evening of conversation, comradery and, of course, a wonderful meal.

We appreciate the generosity of the members of the Turkish Cultural Center and look forward to this opportunity every year to learn more about Ramadan, and to gather with our neighbors of different faiths that share a common ancestor, Abraham.



Mt. Sinai Congregational Church

We are a congregation committed to justice. All are welcome into our full life and ministry regardless of age, race, abilities, economic or marital status, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identification. We are a church that is open and affirming of all people, as we are each made in the image of God.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Old Man's News

Published by the Mt. Sinai Congregational United Church of Christ, formerly known as The Congregational Church in the Community of Old Man's, Miller's Place & Rocky Point, established 1789.

If you would like something in the church's monthly newsletter, the deadline to let the editor know is the **20th of every month**. Please, keep in mind that your submission may be edited for content and for space. Email the OMN Editor at cdwiebel@optonline.net with all submissions and questions.

WORSHIP & SACRAMENTS

Genesis 1:27

So God created humans in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:31

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

John 3:16

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Here's an idea, what if we think of Easter Resurrection as an ongoing process of redemption that *began* with an empty tomb and *continues* in each of us today when we open ourselves and allow it to happen? This April and early May, while Eastertide lasts, the worship board is asking you to give thought to our present Garden, Earth. We will use some of the materials and liturgy offered in SALTProgram's *Climate and Faith** to help us focus these thoughts.

At our creation God gave humans a great responsibility, to care for all that God had made. God gave us a garden to tend, with plants and animals and air and water and sunlight--everything we'd need to keep it flourishing and beautiful. As stated in the SALT materials,

"And now, as we confront what is arguably the greatest challenge in human history, God is calling us all to step up once more: To care for creation – and pass it on to the next generation better, healthier, and harder than we found it.

"We know the facts: the planet is overheating, the weather is

weirding, and extinctions are on the rise. But a 'doom-and-gloom' approach is not the way forward. [Instead, let's] take a 'love-and-act' approach, building on our love for our neighbors, near and far, and our love for God, Maker of heaven and earth, who is...a God of creative, graceful action, in whose image we all are made."*

On April 14th, Eddie, Sue, and the choir will offer a song to the children, "Fall in Love with the Earth." On Earth Day Sunday, April 21st, in coordination with the Missions Board, the Worship Board will give each child and adult a packet of wildflower seeds that attract pollinating insects and birds.

There is much to do to restore this Garden Earth, and because we are made in God's image of creative power and grace, we can make it happen. Amen!



*SALTProgram.org, "Climate and Faith;" printed copies of this resource will be available at church on April 14th.

Sunday School Update



Rejoice! The Lord is Risen.

Happy Easter! Children of all ages gathered in Sunday School for the much-awaited Easter Egg hunt. A total of 223 eggs brought a welcome smile to everyone's face. The fun continued with games in the big room and a last chance to hop their way through our "hop scotch" Lent layout.

The children had a wonderful time this month, learning about the meaning of Easter.

Blessings,

Ms. Stacey, Ms. Cheryl and Ms. Caroline



SUNDAY WORSHIP AT MT. SINAI CHURCH



In-Person Worship - Join us at our 10 a.m. service in the sanctuary. Communion, as always, takes place on the first Sunday of the month.

Digital Worship - Digital worship is available as a live stream. at 10 a.m. on the LIVE tab of our YouTube channel: [Mt. Sinai Congregational Church, UCC - YouTube](#). After that time you can find the service in the regular recordings section.

Offering - There are many ways to donate to the church: via check or cash (offering plate, drop-off or mail), electronic payment via the church website <https://www.msucc.org>, by setting up bill pay through your bank or roll-over from a 401(k)/403(b). We appreciate your support.

Moderator's Message

In the dynamic landscape of church membership, the act of extending invitations plays a pivotal role in fostering growth and engagement within our church. This fundamental practice not only reflects the spirit of inclusivity, but also has tangible impacts on increasing membership and building our vibrant congregation.

One of the key reasons why invitations are vital lies in their ability to reach out to individuals who may be seeking spiritual connection but are hesitant to take the first step. According to a survey conducted by the Barna Group, a leading research organization focused on faith and culture, 41% of unchurched Americans say they would be open to attending a church service if someone they knew invited them. This statistic underscores the significant influence of personal invitations in bridging the gap between potential members and our church community.

Moreover, invitations serve as a catalyst for building meaningful relationships within and outside the church. When existing members extend invitations to friends, family, and acquaintances, they not only create opportunities for new attendees to experience our church's teachings and values, but also cultivate a sense of belonging and support networks. This relational aspect is crucial in retaining members and fostering a sense of community that, as we all know, goes beyond mere attendance.

Furthermore, invitations can lead to long-term engagement and commitment. Studies show that individuals who attend church because of a

personal invitation are more likely to become regular attendees and actively participate in church activities. This trend will most assuredly contribute to our overall goal for growth and sustainability of our beloved church, but also creates a positive cycle of outreach, inclusion, and spiritual development while advancing our core value to bring the Good News to all of God's children.

However, it is essential to recognize that effective invitations go beyond mere gestures; they require genuine care, empathy, and understand-

ing of individual needs and interests. We have already begun to embrace the importance of invitation, by implementing strategies with the many events scheduled for the coming year. Take a look at the events scheduled in the OMN that we hope creates an inviting

and accessible environment for newcomers to get to know our church.

In conclusion, invitations play a pivotal role in increasing church membership by bridging connections, fostering relationships, and nurturing long-term engagement. By embracing a culture of invitation, we can create an environment that is welcoming and encourages participation in the full life of our beloved church. Be bold, start inviting.

Dennis Laderwager
Moderator

Bigreader54@yahoo.com
(631) 682-9276



Retreat - Through the artist's eyes: Rembrandt, and the Prodigal Son

Sunday, April 7, 2024 11:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Rev. Candace Whitman, Facilitator

Join us for a Sunday afternoon retreat exploring Rembrandt's remarkable painting known as *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. Based on Jesus's famous parable in Luke 15:11-32, Rembrandt's painting is a masterpiece that beautifully depicts the characters and events in the parable.

At the same time, the painting helps us see this parable through the artist's eyes, with the insights and details that make it come to life. The painting is also an invitation to see stories within the main story, each of which help us make a more personal connection to this timeless teaching about penitence, forgiveness, and celebration.

The retreat will include guided observation of the Rembrandt painting, small group time, per-



sonal reflection, and a simple art activity. (One needn't be an artist to participate!) The retreat

is designed to help us encounter this scripture afresh and be steeped for a while in the ways of God's love. And there will be good fellowship and creative fun along the way! If possible, please read the parable before the retreat. Art supplies will be provided.

You can still register for the retreat at mssc1@optonline.net or just show up that day. The cost is \$20 per person. Bring a brown bag

lunch (etc.)

BIO: Rev. Candace Whitman is pastor-at-large for the Presbytery of Long Island. Prior to pastoral ministry, Rev. Candy made her career in art and art education, and she remains active in the art world.

Did You Know? - History of Mt. Sinai Church

Recognize the man in the middle of this photograph? It's former President Jimmy Carter, of course! The year: 1985. The event: the East Sixth Street, Bronx apartment house rebuild done by Habitat for Humanity (HFH).



The couple with him are the Alpines, who were very active with our church many years ago and represent the many volunteers from Mt. Sinai Church that went to sheetrock, paint and lend a hand in any way they could.

Jimmy Carter's enthusiasm led members of our church to propose a HFH chapter in Suffolk which is still active to this day.

- Picture and Information provided by Tom Lyon

Upcoming Events@Mt.SinaiChurch

Food is Medicine

April 22, 2024 and April 29, 2024 - Join us for this Monday evening 2-part series from 7-8 p.m. in the church conference room entitled **Food is Medicine**. Iman Marghoob MS, RD, an integrative and functional nutritionist and member of our congregation, will lead us in topics such as: inflammation, gut health, sleep, immune health, movement, herbs and spices, vitamins and minerals, and culinary nutrition. Please register at mccc1@optonline.net by April 14, 2024.



Mark your Calendar!

On May 25, 2024 we will have our Antique Fair and 2nd Annual Quilt Show from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

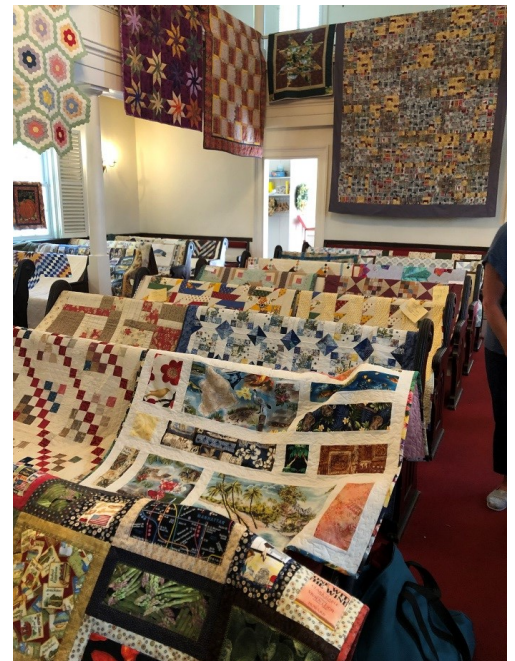
Explore a variety of antiques from about 20 vendors, view the lovely quilts in our sanctuary, and then stroll over to the Red Barn to see what items have been donated over the winter.

P.S. we will need lots of help from the congregation to make this happen, so save the date!

Second Annual Quilt Show

Mt. Sinai Congregational church will hold its 2nd annual Quilt show on Saturday, May 25th. It was a wonderful success last year. Let's make it another fabulous community event as well as a great fundraiser.

You are invited to show a quilt and/or raffle one. Please contact Patrice Perreca (631-807-0662) IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO Participate in this event!



An abundance of quilts at the First Annual Quilt Show held in 2023

The Red Barn Thrift Store Needs Volunteers

Good News! The Red Barn will re-open shortly. But, there is still much to do and we need volunteers to assist with set up after the winter. Please email or call the office if you are able to help. Donations are being accepted at this time. Please arrange to meet with Barbara DeBree to get them into the barn. We ask that you don't leave anything at the barn or church.

CONGREGATIONAL NURTURE

FRIENDLY CIRCLE!

The Friendly Circle meets on Tuesdays in the Conference Room from 2 to 4 p.m. Participants work on personal knitting, crocheting and craft projects while sharing conversation and good feelings.

If you are interested in joining the Friendly Circle, feel free to drop by on Tuesdays or give the office a call at 631-473-1582 to let us know that you are coming.

CARING MINISTRY

Caring Ministry members call and/or visit those members of the congregation who are not able to attend regular church services. In addition, cards are sent for holidays, birthdays, and to those who are experiencing health issues.

The Caring Ministry will continue to generate the prayer list for the bulletin each week. Please send in prayer requests to mssc1@optonline.net.

The Caring Ministry is looking for someone to take over coordination of this group. Please contact Barbara DeTurk, Congregational Board Lead, if you are interested.

MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP AND WOMEN'S BREAKFAST AND LUNCH GROUPS

Men of the church are invited to meet each Thursday morning at 8 a.m. for coffee, food and conversation at Zona Out East diner in Rocky Point. Want to be reminded via email? Please send your email address to Dennis Murphy at murphyde@optonline.net.

Please call the office if you are interested in knowing more about the women's Lunch Bunch and breakfast groups.



CONTACT US

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United Church of Christ



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Please visit our website if you would like to be added to our email list.

Office Hours
9 - Noon
Monday - Friday

Missions

Thanks

Many thanks to all who donated men's briefs for the clients of the **Pax Christi** Hospitality Center in Port Jefferson during Lent. Your generosity will certainly make a difference to those who come to Pax Christi seeking refuge from homelessness. Thank you for your support of Missions.

Beach Clean-Up

Earth Day 2024 is Monday, April 22nd. Mission's third annual Beach Clean-Up is scheduled for Saturday, April 27th at Cedar Beach. We will be meeting at 10:00 a.m. in the northern-most section of the parking lot, nearest the playground. Garbage bags and gloves will be provided.

Come and join us for a day of sunshine and fun as we clean up the beach!

2023 Beach Clean-up Crew



Food Missions

Island Heart Food Pantry Numbers

	January	February
Adults	1487	1363
Children	810	737
60+	174	174
Families	504	494
Individuals	2471	2274

IHFP Hours

Wednesdays
& Thursdays

2:00 to 4:15

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Volunteers Needed!

Please email the office and someone will get back to you.



FOOD
Donations Needed

CHURCH FOOD CUPBOARD

The Food Cupboard at the Church serves local people in need of food and supplies. Thanks to all for the generous donations in the past. We always have a need for canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, canned vegetables and fruits, soups and jelly/jams. We also need personal care items like toilet paper, toothpaste, deodorant and shampoo. Your help is greatly appreciated.

We are open on Tuesdays from 9:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Upcoming Events @Mt.SinaiChurch

March - May

(See individual articles for more information)

April

- 4/6 Lavender Card Ministry, 10 a.m. - noon.
- 4/7 Retreat-Through the Artist's Eyes, 11:30 AM-4:00 p.m.
- 4/22 Food is Medicine - Part I, 7-8 p.m.
- 4/27 Beach clean-up at Cedar Beach, Mt. Sinai, 10 a.m.
- 4/29 Food is Medicine - Part II, 7-8 p.m.

May

- 5/5 Clothing Fundraiser drop-off after the service
- 5/25 Antique Fair and Quilt Show, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Search Committee Update

We'd like to welcome Terry Burke to the committee and thank Dennis Laderwager for his time, effort and contributions to the team. In anticipation of Dennis' departure, it was best to have his replacement begin before the interview process begins.

Based on feedback from our congregational meeting with Rev. Toll, the Search Committee has created a one page job description with a link to our profile, which is being sent to career placement centers at various divinity schools. As of this writing, we have not received a response to our profile. We will keep you posted.

KEEP GATHERING THINGS! THE BIG CLOTHING DRIVE IS ALMOST HERE!

The time is almost here. Please bring all of your clothing, shoes, handbags, backpacks, stuffed animals, small, single item, plastic toys (NO PUZZLES, BOARD GAMES, LEGOS OR TOYS WITH PIECES) and linens (including towels, curtains and table linens; NO BLANKETS OR COMFORTERS) to church on May 5th before 11 am. All items should be placed in a kitchen size garbage bag. Please place your bags on the sidewalk near the windows of Voorhees Hall (please do not block any doors or paths leading to the front doors).

Remember the company pays 20 cents per pound up to 10,000 pounds (100 bags = about 2,000 pounds) and 25 cents for each pound over 10,000.

If you will not be in church that Sunday, you can place your donations in the closet in the middle of the big room in the basement. If you need assistance bringing the bags to church or downstairs, we can help. Please email us at dmcinerney63@gmail.com not later than Friday, April 26th. If you need to come during the week, please email or call the church office to make arrangements. Thank you all for your support.

